



**Auburn, Maine**

Conservation Commission

60 Court Street | Auburn, Maine 04210 [www.auburnmaine.gov](http://www.auburnmaine.gov) |

207.333.6601

## **Minutes**

**Tuesday, October 19 2021 - (Community Room, Auburn Hall)**

**Meeting Called to order by Sam Boss at 6:10**

### **1) Roll Call & Introductions**

Commissioners Present: Sam Boss, Jane Costlow, Dave Griswold, Amy Dieterich, Rhyanna LaRose

Commissioners Absent: Adam Platz (excused), Kryston Chapman

Guests: Kathy Shaw, Chair of Ag Committee

### **2) Approval of minutes.**

Dave moved and Amy seconded approving minutes from the August meeting. They were unanimously approved by those who had been present at the August meeting.

### **3) Work in Progress**

There was a lengthy discussion about the upcoming FERC licensing process for Great Falls and Upper Barker Dams, and what action steps might be taken.

Sam noted the complexity of the situation, concurrent licensing processes, different points of opportunity for public input. It is very possible for us to get involved in the discussion. There will be a meeting with Eric Cousens and L-A city staff this coming Friday.

Sam invited reflections on the the FERC process: How might we generate public interest and connect with others?

The Commissioners outlined the following questions to go to Eric in advance of the Friday morning:

1. What is the overall timetable for the process, and when can citizens' groups play a part?
2. What kinds of improvements have municipalities requested and gotten or been denied?

3. What are the restrictions on the physical area (above/below the dam) in which we could ask for improvements?
4. Once the license is issued, is there any recourse for communities to petition for a change before the next renewal date?
5. What opportunities may emerge for requesting installation and/or improvement of fish passage?
6. How does the public access materials as they emerge about the city's work on the Dam relicensing? We have found it challenging to find materials - could there be a link on the Conservation Commission page?
7. Is there a role for us in convening a meeting various groups/stakeholders to draft specific proposals for desired recreational improvements?
8. The Commissioners wondered if there could be a request for funds for community education on the river and hydrology, which local teachers could tap into for developing programming in science/ history and related topics that have to do with the river.

There were also some questions about the Upper Barker Dam relicensing process. Sam: we need to get focused on action items.

#### **4) Updates and Planning**

- a) Open Space Index Update. Jane reported on the status of the work, there was discussion of the possibility of working with Bates students to compile some of the information.
- b) Invasive Species focus for the winter. Dave noted that the Story Walk along the river includes several informational stands on invasive (one on plants, the other on insects).

There was general discussion of organizing events, focusing on the possibility of a speaker to address the brown-tail moth, probably in March and most likely on zoom. Dave has a contact and will work on finalizing a date. We can work with Liz to promote the event. Jane will talk with someone at Auburn Public Library about a theme-related book display.

Regarding the open space index, Amy suggested that once we have the list of open spaces, we could proceed to a second phase focused on identifying invasive species, perhaps in city-owned open spaces. A third phase could involve developing a strategy for how to mitigate/combat invasive. It seems possible that Bates students might be able to work on invasive species issues.

#### **5) Subcommittee/Related Interests Updates**

- a) Community Forest Subcommittee Update. Dave reported that the group is brainstorming grant opportunities and that trees were planted on Washington St. last week. There is ongoing discussion of developing an arboretum in Lewiston.

Jane agreed to send commissioners the following list of Action Items from this evening's meeting:

- Members will participate in the preliminary FERC this coming Friday meeting as/if they are able
- Jane will send Eric Cousens the questions we generated last night in advance of Friday's meeting

- Members will attend one of the two FERC meetings on November 4 as/if they are able
- Members will spend some time reviewing the FERC materials on the Auburn City page as they become available
- Dave will research getting a speaker on invasives, probably for early March.
- Jane will contact someone at APL about doing a book display on invasives to coincide with the speaker.
- Rhyanna will work on pulling together available information on the Little Androscoggin as related to potential recreational use.

*Meeting adjourned at 8:07.*

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Costlow". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J" and a distinct "C" at the end.

Jane Costlow, Secretary